

Winona logger wins top honors for '08

Forests in the Ozarks are better-managed as a result of this dedicated professional's example.

WINONA, Mo.- Missouri Department of Conservation Resource Forester Michael Norris had difficulty nominating this year's Missouri Logger of the Year Award winner. The problem was not lack of qualified nominees. He simply ran out of superlatives to describe the work of Larry Young.

Young became Missouri's second Professional Logger of the Year receiving his award from State Forester Lisa Allen at the Missouri Forest Products Association's annual meeting July 26 at Lake of the Ozarks. He edged out other regional logger of the year winners for the honor, taking home a top-of-the-line Stihl chainsaw for his exemplary professionalism.



State Forester Lisa Allen and Larry Young

Young operates a two-person crew consisting of himself and log cutter David Minich. He completed Missouri's Professional Timber Harvester Training in 1999 and kept his qualifications current.

"Larry's operation is small-scale," said Norris. "He finds markets for small-diameter material,

cull trees and shortleaf pine, materials that many other logging crews would not be interested in. He has made them profitable.”

Norris said the positive effects of Young’s dedication to efficient use of every tree possible go far beyond his own bottom line.

“Efficient utilization allows Larry to give private forest owners higher bids for low-quality timber,” said Norris. “When he is done, they don’t have to hire someone else to come in and do timber stand improvement cuts, remove slash and generally clean up after him. That makes landowners more likely to manage their forest land, keeping it at maximum productivity. And they tell other landowners about their experience, making others more likely to actively manage their forests. Larry and David are walking recommendations for good forest management.”

Young’s qualifications as Professional Logger of the Year do not stop there, however. Norris said his commitment to “sale aesthetics” is unexcelled.

“When Larry and David are on the job, my work supervising timber sales is minimal,” said Norris. “They complete most of the clean-up work as they do the job. Spring poles (dangerously bent tree trunks) are cut, and skid trails and log landings are located in the most efficient manner possible. The landings are so thoroughly cleared of woody debris that at least one landowner has used them to plant food plots. Many private landowners have commented on the lack of residual tree damage after the harvest is over. His work sites are just unbelievably clean.”

Young’s dedication to excellence made him important to the success of restoring oak-pine woodlands on Rocky Creek Conservation Area in Shannon County.

“For a private landowner looking for a quality logging job, Larry is the first logger I suggest to conduct the sale,” said Norris. “He may not be able to pay as high for stumpage as other, larger logging operations, but the quality job you will receive will be more beneficial in the long run and result in greater customer satisfaction.”

Young is one of two co-recipients of the Ozark Region Logger of the Year Award. The other was Danny Chaney, Birch Tree. Norris said Chaney’s work was a major factor in the success of harvest operations around Twin Pines Conservation Education Center in Shannon County.

“That job was small by most standards, but its importance far exceeds its size,” said Norris. “The stands harvested by Danny represent different silviculture prescriptions that will be used as interpretive areas for an educational hiking trail, as well as for programs presented at Twin Pines. Few other parcels of state land will receive greater scrutiny than this area. Danny understood this responsibility and accepted the job knowing that the Conservation Department was looking for the perfect logging job, and he succeeded.”

The Conservation Department, with the help of the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association and the Missouri Forest Products Association select state logger of the year award recipients. They choose from a field of regional loggers of the year nominated by Conservation Department foresters throughout the state. Foresters are asked to nominate only outstanding loggers, so not

every region has a nominee every year. This year's other regional recipients were: --St. Louis - Shannon Jarvis, Potosi. --Southwest - Jim Nelson, Oldfield. --Southeast - Gregg and Joe Brinkley, Piedmont.

State Loggers of the Year receive a Stihl chainsaw from program sponsor Crader Distributing, Marble Hill. Regional nominees receive Stihl protective equipment kits.

Professional Logger of the Year nominees must have completed Missouri's Professional Timber Harvester's Training Program or equivalent training and be current with qualifications. They must practice sustainable forest management and best management practices and safe work habits and have low residual tree damage. Production amounts do not matter, and nominees do not need to be members of any professional organization.

For more information about the Professional Logger of the Year program, contact John Tuttle, Missouri Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, phone (573) 522-4115, ext. 3304, e-mail john.tuttle@mdc.mo.gov .

-Jim Low-